

The Diary of Remus J Lupin

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The Diary of Remus J Lupin

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****_The Diary of Remus J. Lupin_****

_This tale grew in the telling, with new parts blossoming out of nowhere. I'd like to thank Moon for suggesting the first scene, and Peeves for suggesting the last. I hope you don't find it confusing.

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_Imagine you are reading a diary that shows you the scenes as they are described in the text, rather like Tom Riddle's in Chamber of Secrets. _

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A battered, leather-bound book lies on the table. You pick it up, flipping through the pages of neat handwriting, the full moons carefully marked in red. A page catches your eye and you stop. You read a few words, and a scene begins to materialise before you.

_ 'I went back to my lessons as soon as I could, hoping they would not realise where I had been. Or what I had been. I found that Severus Snape had been teaching my classes.' _

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'Professor Lupin, do you want my werewolf essay?' Hermione came up to the desk towards the end of the lesson, three rolls of parchment in her hand. 'It's a bit more than Professor Snape asked for â€¦ should I give it to him instead?'

Remus glanced at her with a tired smile. 'No, that's fine, leave it on the desk, please. What was the title again?'

'The ways to recognise and kill werewolves.' She gave him an uncertain smile.

Remus nodded slowly. 'Well, I'll have a word with him, I'll let him know that you've done it.'

Hermione nodded. She looked at Remus piercingly for a moment, and he wondered what she was thinking. For a moment he thought she would say something more, but then she turned.

'Thank you,' he said automatically. Hermione went back to her seat, leaving Remus with three rolls of parchment on how to recognise and kill werewolves to add to his marking pile. Snape had left him with a great deal of work to catch up on, for he had set every class some work but had left it for Remus to take in and mark. Typically, he had set the third, fourth and fifth year classes essays about werewolves, with different titles but the same goal. Remus had already taught the fourth years about werewolves, though the words had stuck in his throat, and he knew how to put up with all the comments about them. Even so, he was going to have to speak to Snape about all this. But first, there was something else he had to do. The bell rang, and all the students began packing up their books.

'Wait a moment, Harry, I'd like a word.'

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_'Harry's story filled me with so many mixed emotions. What he must feel when he sees a Dementor â€" it makes my troubles pale into nothing. I try not to think of Sirius, who must have found a way to fight them off. It is clear that Harry does not know who he is. That's one thing to be grateful for. _

_'Why does everything make me think of Sirius? It's ridiculous. He's a traitor, he's my enemy, he's trying to attack James' son. Aren't twelve years long enough for me to learn?' _

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After Harry had gone, Remus sank back at his desk. Fighting Dementors was exhausting and difficult, he wondered how Harry would cope with it. He shook his head slowly, recalling what Harry had said. Even he did not hear anything as terrible as that when he met with a Dementor.

He looked down at the papers on his desk wearily. Right now what he really wanted was to go and lie down for a long time, preferably until the moon waned some more. That didn't seem to be an option. Perhaps he should read some of these essays before he went to Snape.

Both activities were equally unappealing. He unrolled Hermione's essay, wondering what she had thought.

As always, it was meticulously researched, and she had even managed to get some of the more complicated details correct, although even the textbooks were wrong on some counts. She'll be Head Girl one day, he thought. He read through it. A paragraph stopped him.

_Of course, an easy way to identify a werewolf in his human form is simply to pay attention to the phase of the moon and the suspect's behaviour. Regardless of the use of the recent Wolfsbane Potion, a werewolf will never be seen in his human form around the time of the full moon. Furthermore, a side effect of the transformation is intense exhaustion and weakness, which will often be attributed to illness by the suspect, but which will inevitably fade as the moon wanes. There are other, more subtle clues. A fear of silver or of the full moon is often evident, which can be seen in many different forms, for instance in the working of the Pavor Charm where a person must confront what he fears, or in the presence of a Boggart. _

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Remus read that paragraph a second time, and thought back to his first lesson with Hermione's class, with the Boggart. He had faced it, to prevent it from reaching Harry, and as always it had turned to the full moon. Did she suspect something? It wouldn't surprise him, she was more than sufficiently quick-witted.

Remus gave a wan smile as he recalled his own Boggart-fighting lessons, where he had been unable to think of anything humorous to do to the full moon. Sirius had had plenty of suggestions, though, and one of them did have the desired effect in the end. His smile widened as he pictured the Man in the Moon, as Sirius had named it, peering out with spectacles like Professor McGonagall's from the moon's face.

Don't think about Sirius, he warned himself angrily. _It won't help matters. _ He looked back at the essay, reading it with forced concentration, distracting himself with the detailed and specific list of what could be used to hurt werewolves. _Setting classes essays like this, _he thought before he could stop himself, _that'll work too._ But then, that was what Snape had hoped for.

Pushing aside the nagging suspicion that Hermione suspected something, he stood up. No point in delaying things. He left the essays on the desk "he could come and mark them later" and went along towards the staffroom. Madam Pomfrey stopped him in the corridor.

'Remus, you ought to be in bed,' she said sternly, scanning him with a professional eye. 'Where are you going?'

'Staffroom,' he answered shortly. 'I'm fine.'

She peered into his face with a shake of her head. 'You don't look fine. Promise me you won't do anything tiring this evening.'

'I can take care of myself,' he snapped, and then regretted it. She meant well. 'I'll be all right,' he said more gently. 'I have to keep my work going, though.'

Madam Pomfrey looked at him through narrowed eyes. 'Go on then, just you be careful. I'm not going to be happy if you turn up half-dead tonight.'

'I'll be fine,' he repeated, and he walked past her to the door to the staffroom. Snape was not there. He went to Professor Sprout, who was sitting at the long table in the middle, all her papers spread out over it.

'Do you know where Severus is?'

She looked up. 'Down in those dungeons of his, he spends half his life there. Why d'you want him?'

'Just some stuff,' he replied absently, turning to go. Sprout watched him leave, and he thought he saw her sit back with relief as he shut the door. _Too blasted touchy, that's what you are,_ he told himself. Snape must be getting to him. He knew he had a tendency to be snappish and sharp around the full moon, and he normally could counter this and control it.

Remus was breathing rapidly by the time he had gone down six flights of stairs to the dungeons, and he paused outside the door to steady himself. _Well, now for the fireworks,_ he thought. He knocked.

'Enter,' murmured a voice so quietly he had to strain to hear it. He did so.

Snape had his back to the door, bent over a cauldron. Thick yellow smoke filled the room, making Remus cough and splutter. He paused, and Snape turned around slowly.

'Oh,' he said, looking at Remus as if at a small worm he was going to add to a potion. 'A miraculous recovery, I see. What do _you_ want?'

Remus fanned the yellow smoke from his face with one hand. 'I need to speak with you about some of the things you set my classes to do while I was ill.' He coughed again. 'Do you think we could speak somewhere where there's a bit less smoke?'

Snape's lip curled. He turned to stir the cauldron, and another billow of the foetid smoke emerged from the unpleasant-looking mixture. Remus spluttered, but it didn't seem to trouble Snape at all.

'Your classes?' he asked, his back still turned. 'I've never seen so many ignorant students in one place before.'

'The things you were asking my third years to do are beyond the normal range of things they should be studying, it's not on the syllabus until the summer term or the start of the fourth year,' said Remus as steadily as he could with the foul-smelling smoke in his nostrils.

'And _you're_ going to teach them all about werewolves then, are you?' sneered Snape, spitting each word out with venom. 'I'll believe that when I see it. We're going to have the first generation of

Hogwarts students who believe that if they give a werewolf a pat and say 'good dog,' they won't get bitten, because werewolves are all decent people really.' He took a stride forwards. 'There's no point in you giving the students lessons on werewolves. They need to hear the real story, from someone who was almost killed by a werewolf, who knows what you're really like.'

Remus flinched a little. The smoke was making his eyes water. 'Anyway,' he said with some effort, 'the third years thought the work you set them was excessive, and I've let them off it.'

'Oh, you have, have you?' With the yellow smoke billowing around him, Snape seemed considerably more formidable. 'And how will they learn, pray?'

'They're doing well,' he said. 'They're ahead of what I had planned.'

'Indeed.' Remus had not thought Snape's sneer could deepen, but it did. 'How €" ambitious.'

'Hermione wrote the essay,' he continued levelly. 'Do you want it to mark?'

'You're more than welcome to keep it. And the others. You ought to read them. It's scarcely my problem.' He turned back to his potion and began to drip in a green fluid. The smoke thickened, and Remus spluttered, wondering if Snape was trying to poison him. Probably.

'If you should take my classes again, I'd ask you to keep to the scheme of work I've planned,' he said.

'I sincerely hope I do not have to teach your classes again,' Snape replied in his hissing voice. 'The students are both ignorant and bad-mannered. Clearly you do not care to keep discipline.'

Remus took a breath to make a sharp retort, inhaled a lungful of the now blue smoke, and choked. By the time he could speak again, he had decided that it would not be wise to anger Snape any more.

'Then I'll keep the essays. That's all I needed to know. Good evening.' Breathing deeply to rid himself of the smoke in his lungs, Remus left the dungeon with relief.

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_'Snape's comment led me to think, inevitably, of the occasion when I had done my best to kill him. In that frame of mind I read through the essays the fifth years had written. Snape had made them each write about an incident where a werewolf had attacked a normal person, and how they would change werewolf legislation. It did nothing to improve my mood. But I tell myself that it doesn't really matter. It's nothing. Severus Snape and all, life is infinitely better here than anywhere else I've been in the past twelve years.'

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_You flip through the pages, past descriptions of staffroom banter

and the witticisms of his classes, skimming over a few descriptions of Dementor-fighting lessons. Another page catches your eye, dated a few months after the previous one. The writing is messy, unlike most of the diary entries, as if his hand had trembled as he had written. A scene begins to appear, outdoors this time. _

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_'I was at the Quidditch match, Gryffindor versus Ravenclaw' _

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Remus sat in the stands with the other Gryffindor supporters, watching the Quidditch. He hoped the Dementors would not return, for Harry's sake. Their evening lessons were very tiring for both of them. Though the Dementors affected Harry far more badly, Remus too would see the same sights when the Dementor appeared, the same ruined building, the same contorted face.

_Don't think about that, _he instructed himself, and he looked up at the game. He spotted Harry on the Firebolt at once. _Was it really from Sirius?_ he wondered, and wished he hadn't. He could be sure that there wasn't anything dangerous about it, half the staff had checked it for curses and hexes, himself included. Though he knew little about broomsticks, he could see the quality of it when Harry changed direction in mid-air.

His thoughts were forgotten as Harry and the Ravenclaw Seeker both shot off in the same direction, and he saw the glint of gold they were heading towards. A gasp around the crowd distracted him, and he looked down for a moment. Beneath the racing players stood three tall black shapes. Springing to his feet, Remus began to push his way down through the crowd, not certain what he was planning to do but aware that there must not be a repetition of the events of the last match. He made his way down, not taking his eyes off the two students racing through the air, groping for his wand. Harry did not falter.

Suddenly there was a brilliant flash of silver. Remus stopped dead. He could see Harry's wand, and a huge shape hurtled through the air towards the Dementors on the ground. Remus felt as though his heart would stop as he saw what form it had taken. A giant silver stag was leaping at the Dementors on the ground.

'_Prongs,_' he gasped, his voice inaudible amidst the shouts. '_Prongs._' He caught hold of the railing for support, and stared as the Dementors tumbled to the ground. The silver stag dissolved into nothing, leaving him feeling empty. He had almost forgotten about the race to catch the Snitch until the stadium erupted in an explosion of cheering and waving of red and gold banners. It galvanised him to action, and he hurried down to where the Dementors lay fallen, a suspicion taking shape in his heart.

When one of the Dementors began to wriggle, he nodded decisively and looked back at the stands. Minerva was also making her way down, and he beckoned to her. She looked pleased and furious simultaneously,

and he moved aside as she strode over to the 'Dementors.' When he saw the head of Draco Malfoy appear, struggling with the robes and the weight of another boy across him, he managed a smile.

Harry had landed not far off, surrounded by a congratulating crowd. Remus went closer.

'That was quite some Patronus,' he said when Harry was in earshot. Harry grinned excitedly, Remus could tell he didn't know the significance of its shape. Should he tell him? Remus hesitated, but the crowd of cheering supporters swept Harry away and the moment was gone.

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The page turns, the scene dissolves. You look across at the next page, and continue reading. Another image forms before your eyes.

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A voice was shouting something across his dream, and there was a bell ringing. As it penetrated his sleep-fuddled mind, Remus realised that it was the alarm bell. He leapt up, sheets and blankets falling away, and grabbed for his wand. The bell only rang in the event of a great emergency; the last time he had heard it had been when he was a student, on the night that Voldemort had appeared.

'All staff report to the staffroom immediately.' Minerva's voice echoed through the corridors through the magical megaphone, repeating her message again and again.

Remus pulled on some slippers and a cloak and headed for the door. Lights were burning all over the Gryffindor tower, he noticed.

Astrid Sinistra emerged from her room just as Remus went past, rubbing her eyes.

'Do you know what's going on?' she asked breathlessly.

'No. I just woke up myself.' They hurried through the corridors, Astrid half-running to keep up with Remus' long strides. The other staff were going into the staffroom as they arrived, talking nervously.

'Is it You-Know-Who?' Professor Sprout was asking Flitwick. He shrugged his shoulders, glancing around him with a worried eye.

'I don't know â€" ah, here's Minerva.'

Minerva McGonagall waved a hand for silence.

'The castle must be searched immediately,' she announced. 'Sirius Black was seen in the Gryffindor dorms about ten minutes ago. Nobody has been hurt, but this was due to good fortune.'

Remus caught his breath. How could Sirius have gotten in to the school, and then into Gryffindor? Either he had learned a lot from

Voldemort, or â€" or he was using the old entrances. Remus stood torn, not knowing what he should do. It was clear what he should do. He ought to go to Minerva or Dumbledore at once, and tell them to watch the one-eyed witch and the Whomping Willow, and to look for a big black dog like a Grim. But he stood still as Minerva continued to speak, explaining exactly which parts of the castle they were to search.

'Please remember that Black is highly dangerous. He is carrying a knife at the moment, and there is no doubt that he would not hesitate to use it. So keep your eyes opened,' she concluded, and began to walk towards the door. Remus hesitated no longer. If Sirius killed someone else tonight, it would be his own fault for not warning them. He stopped her.

'Minerva, I think there's something you should know,' he began in a quiet voice that was all but inaudible in the chatter and bustle as all the staff began to move towards the doors.

'What? Speak up,' she said curtly. 'If it's not vital than tell me later, Remus, please.' She continued walking, and Remus kept pace with her.

'What actually happened?' he asked, stalling for time. 'How did he get into Gryffindor, do you know?'

'He had the passwords.' Minerva turned to face him, her face pale with anger now. 'That blundering good-for-nothing Longbottom wrote them down and left them lying around.'

'Oh.' A perfectly simple explanation, he thought. There was probably another as good for how he got into the castle in the first place. Remus hesitated again. 'What did he do?'

'Nothing, apart from rip a curtain. It's extremely lucky, though. Ron Weasley woke up in the night to find him standing over him with a knife.'

Remus' face turned white. 'Is he all right?'

'Yes, he screamed and Black fled.' They came to the staircase. Remus was about to speak, but before he could summon up the courage, Minerva said, 'You're supposed to be covering the third floor, aren't you?'

He nodded.

'Take care, and don't do anything foolish. You may have been a match for Black when you were students, but I doubt you are now.'

Remus frowned and didn't answer. Minerva began to climb the stairs two at a time, and Remus had no choice but to go down to the third floor. Well, there was one thing he could check.

He almost ran through the passages to the statue of the one-eyed witch. He looked around carefully, his nerves twanging. If Sirius was still in the school, it was very likely he would come here. But there was no sign of him. Remus tapped the witch's hump with his wand and murmured, 'Dissendium.' It opened, and he looked down. Nothing.

Taking a deep breath, Remus went down the shaft, his wand held ready. Minerva was probably right that he couldn't out-fight Sirius, but he would have the advantage of having a wand. Unless Sirius had managed to acquire his own, but that was extremely unlikely. Remus stood at the bottom of the shaft and looked down the tunnel. It seemed empty, and it was very silent.

Perhaps he was wrong. Sirius was probably using the Dark Arts to get in, he wouldn't need to play around with their old entrances and tricks. He kept glancing nervously upwards, half-expecting Sirius to come leaping down onto his shoulders. But after a few minutes of standing in the dark waiting, Remus decided that Sirius was not going to use this tunnel. He listened carefully before climbing out again.

The corridor was dark and deserted. Remus reluctantly left the statue of the one-eyed witch and began to go over the rest of the third floor. He was quite certain he would find nothing, though. If Sirius had fled, there would be no finding him hanging around here. As he poked around behind curtains and looking into disused classrooms, Remus wondered what he ought to do. He was quite glad that he had not told Minerva. The explanations that would have ensued would have been awful. After all he had received from the school and especially from Dumbledore, he had repaid his trust like this!

But what could he do? Go to Dumbledore and explain that twenty years ago he had broken all the school rules and also the law, and had encouraged his friends to do likewise? The time for telling him had been at the start of the year, not now. The time for telling him had been when Sirius went to Azkaban. Remus realised that Sirius could have been in any of the last three places he had looked, for he had not been paying the least bit of attention to his search. Here too I fail, he thought glumly. He went back along the passage and looked in the places properly. But there was nothing.

The search continued until dawn, and Remus continued to search his heart as well. But he did not find the courage to go to Dumbledore with an explanation. Sirius was clearly not using their childhood tricks to get into the castle, he had learnt much since then and had no use for them. He could not face the grief and disappointment that he knew would cross Professor Dumbledore's expression when he told him what they had done. Dumbledore trusted him, and he would no longer break that trust. What had been done in the past was over.

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_The scene fades away. You skim over descriptions of exams and the success of the seventh-year NEWT class. The pages of the book seem to be turning on their own, as if ruffled by an unfelt wind. Finally the book falls open at a page near the end, where the writing is even more scrawling and messy than before. Again a scene unfurls before your eyes, on one of the days marked in red. _

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The sky was tinted with the orange and gold of sunset. Snape would be along shortly, Remus thought, with the Wolfsbane Potion. He turned the parchment over and finished marking the essay. Now that was done,

he wouldn't have any work hanging over him when he recovered.

He wondered how Hagrid was getting on. A thought made him frown. Harry was bound to try to do something, perhaps just visit Hagrid. He recalled seeing him in the library investigating incidents of Hippogriff assault with his friends, and he knew they were worried. But Harry should not be going out now that it was getting dark. Well, there was an easy way to check up on him.

Remus rummaged through his desk drawer and unrolled a tattered piece of parchment. He smiled a little as he tapped it with his wand and said, 'I solemnly swear I am up to no good.' For once, that was not true. Well, he should have handed the map back to Filch, or put it in the fire, but he couldn't bear to do either. He remembered how Peter had lost it to Filch during one particularly risky adventure, and how furious Sirius and James had been. But there was no way he could have permitted Harry to keep it. Enough rule-breaking was enough, especially now that he was a teacher.

The twisting lines appeared, and he saw that Snape was indeed brewing something in his dungeon. Automatically, he looked for Filch and Peeves, and smiled a little. Harry probably had found this exceedingly useful. But that wasn't what he was using this for tonight. After a quick look at the Gryffindor common room, he established that Harry was not there, and neither were Hermione nor Ron. He scanned the intricate picture, and finally found the trio out on the lawn, going towards Hagrid's hut. He sighed, and wondered if he should go and stop them. But he probably didn't have the time. He gave a nervous glance at the darkening sky. Rising, he left the room and went down the corridor to a window that overlooked the lawn. He was not surprised to find that he couldn't see them. If Harry had any sense he'd take the Invisibility Cloak with him. Remus found himself recalling how tricky it was to fit three people under the Cloak, and wondering if Harry found the same problems. _That is not the point,_ he told himself sternly.

He returned to his office, expecting Snape to make an appearance at any moment. But he was still hanging around the dungeons and his office adjacent to the Slytherin common room. If he didn't come up, Remus would have to go down and get the Wolfsbane Potion from him personally. That would not be fun. He began to clear up his other papers, glancing at the Marauder's Map occasionally. Harry, Ron and Hermione were all in Hagrid's house, he noted. Well, they would be safe enough there.

An essay had gone missing. Remus began to hunt around for it, wishing the Map would show useful things like this occasionally. Now, if he could devise something that found missing papers he would be very popular in the staffroom. No day went by but one of the teachers could be found turning the place upside down to find a lesson plan or a register or a piece of homework. After some time, Remus found the missing essay stuffed into a book as a bookmark. Now that was a stupid place to put it, he thought.

He looked back at the Marauder's Map. It took a moment for him to find Harry, Hermione and Ron, for they had left Hagrid's hut. Remus saw Hagrid in the hut and hoped he was all right. After a moment he saw them not far from the Whomping Willow. Then he read another name, on a point which appeared to be in Ron's arms. He was glad he was not far from his chair.

Peter Pettigrew, the Marauder's Map spelt out in uncompromising black letters. He stared at it as if he might be imagining the words. Peter was dead, Peter died twelve years ago, he couldn't be in the grounds of Hogwarts. Did the Map show corpses? He gave a shiver. It was absurd, it was impossible. Perhaps the charm on the Map was finally wearing down. He looked at the rest of it for confirmation of this theory. He saw Snape still in the dungeon, Filch in the kitchens with Mrs Norris, and himself in his office.

He took a long shaking breath, gripping the arms of the chair. How on earth could this be? Was Peter alive, after all these years? Why had he not revealed himself, come forward, why had he allowed everyone, even his mother, to think he was dead? Remus' thoughts were wild and leaping from one thing to another. He stared at the map again. Ron and Peter were just passing the Whomping Willow. He looked around and almost cried out at what he saw. Another dot, labelled 'Sirius Black' was moving rapidly to Harry and the others. Sitting in his chair, his eyes riveted to the parchment, he saw Sirius leap at the group, and he clutched his wand. But Sirius bypassed Harry and grabbed Ron and Peter. Another dot, mysteriously named 'Crookshanks,' was moving ahead of Sirius, and towards the Willow. As he stared, he saw Sirius drag Ron and Peter into the tunnel, with Crookshanks following. He stared for a moment longer, too frozen with panic and incredulity to think what to do. It was only when he saw Harry go down the tunnel accompanied by Hermione that he was galvanised into action.

He grabbed a cloak and his wand and raced from the classroom. There was no time to go for help, and it would involve explaining all about the Marauder's Map. He charged down the staircase, nothing in his mind except the desperate need to reach Sirius and Harry before anything happened. _If only my strength is enough,_ he prayed internally as he almost fell down the stairs in his haste.

Nobody noticed him as he raced across the grounds to the Whomping Willow. He broke a branch from a nearby tree and began to prod the trunk. His hand was shaking a little, and he kept missing the knot, which only added to his impatience and awkwardness. Finally the tree froze and he flung himself into the tunnel. He began running even before making a light with his wand. He noticed great gouges and clawmarks along the tunnel's walls, and he ran faster, pushing himself as far as he could go.

The racing journey passed in a whirl of doubts and fears. If Peter was alive, did that make Sirius innocent? No, of course not. How on earth had he survived? What had he done? What had Sirius done? Was it all some kind of incredible trick? He ran, expecting at every stride to encounter Sirius â€" had he been transformed? The Map didn't say. Remus had little faith in his ability to come off better in a fight with Padfoot. Perhaps Peterâ€|. Remus did not have an opportunity to finish that thought, for he had reached the end of the tunnel. He scrambled up into a dusty little room, terribly familiar to him. He looked all around wildly, but saw nothing. He could hear sounds, though, and he looked at the stairs. Then he heard a voice screaming in panic. Remus recognised it as Hermione.

'WE'RE UP HERE! WE'RE UP HERE â€" SIRIUS BLACK â€" QUICK!'

The words are almost too smudged to read now, and the scene dissolves. The pages of the diary turn one last time under your fingers, to the final page. Here too are the scrawled letters, and a new scene begins to form, again outside. _

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Something was tickling his face. He raised a hand weakly to brush whatever small insect was running over him. It crawled over his tired hand, and he shook it off, opening his eyes. The black beetle crawled away into the dead leaves, and Remus sighed. What on earth was he doing here?

It all came back to him in a flash. Sirius, was his first thought. And Peter. Snape â€| Hermione â€| the Shrieking Shack â€| the Potion he hadn't taken. With a shudder he tried to dredge through the dim memories of his transformation. All those people had been around in the Forest â€" what had he done? It was with a feeling of great relief that he realised he had done nothing at all.

Apart from try to kill Padfoot. He shuddered again. The beetle came back and began to crawl over his foot. Remus didn't shake it off. Small crawly things did not trouble him at all. His next thought was, what had happened? He went through his memories desperately. The Marauder's Map, the scene in the Shrieking Shack, Snape's arrival, Peter â€" he broke off his thought, recalling that he had almost killed Peter. If Harry hadn't intervenedâ€|. Remus shivered again. But he could not recall what had happened. He had been shackled to Peter, and then â€" then he had transformed. After that his memories were vague, the wolf's memories rather than his own. He remembered his fight with Padfoot vividly, struggling to make the wolf recognise him and failing. But he had no idea what had become of the others in the struggle, save that he had hurt nobody. Again and again, like a person prodding a sore place to see if it was any better, he went through his mind to check that he had done no harm.

Well, it wasn't really enough to have hurt nobody. The fact was that he had been loose and dangerous in the school grounds, something that had never happened before. And there was only one way to be certain that it would never happen again.

But what about Sirius and Peter? Those were more urgent needs. He sat up wearily. At least he didn't feel as rotten as he sometimes did after the transformations. But he couldn't very well walk into school like this. One of the most infuriating aspects of the werewolf transformation was that in the process of transforming, all the clothes he was wearing were torn off. This normally ended up with him having to painstakingly mend them. But now his clothes were gone, and so was his wand. He had to find it before he went up to school. If he could find the school. The Forbidden Forest held fewer terrors for him than for most people, both because he was one of the most frightening things in it, and also because they had explored it so often as students.

Remus smiled suddenly. There was one thing he had now that he could be certain of. All those times Sirius had been kind to him when they were students, and when they had left Hogwarts, he could be confident that Sirius was everything he had thought him to be. The warmth of that feeling filled him, and he began to feel considerably better. He got to his feet. Now, where had they been when he had transformed?

More to the point, where was he now? He looked around, trying to get his bearings.

Ah, he hadn't gone too far, or he had come in a circle, because he could see Hagrid's path. He began to walk along it as quickly as he could manage. Worries were beginning to form in his mind. Had they managed to keep hold of Peter? And what had Snape said about them? He knew how much harm Snape was capable of. He remembered something else. Hermione had worked it out, just from Snape's essay. He had thought she might. Snape should be pleased about that, at least.

But first, his wand and something to wear. He had not been far from the lake when he had transformed, fortunately out of sight of the school. He kept running over Sirius' explanation of events in his mind. Twelve years in Azkaban, and unjustly. The horror of it filled him, washing over his mind like a wave at flood-tide. But now he would be able to clear his name.

He came to the place where he had transformed. How could he have been so stupid? How, in the Shrieking Shack, surrounded by his old friends, could he have forgotten what time of the month it was and what he was? He knew that there was only one way to make sure he did not do this again. Snape was right. A werewolf could not be a fit teacher for anyone.

He could not see his wand anywhere on the grass, and he got down on his hands and knees to look properly. A few scraps of cloth showed him what fate his clothes had suffered. The rest had probably blown away during the night. Remus hoped desperately that his wand had not been picked up by some passing creature or blown away as well. He spotted the place where he had fought with Padfoot by the torn-up grass and the clawmarks. It would be somewhere just up from here, he thought, and went that way.

His hand fell on something hard and wooden. He gave a great sigh of relief as he picked up his wand, and sat down on the grass to check it over. It was damp with dew, but undamaged. He gave it an experimental wave, and produced a shower of sparks. For a moment he considered using it to conjure up some clothes, but conjuring spells were tricky at best, and probably not a good idea if he wanted to get up to school before lunchtime. But neither could he go up to the school like this. He looked around him as if expecting his clothes to blossom from a tree, and he saw Hagrid's hut. There was a washing line that had been left up last night, and various brightly-coloured clothes were hanging from it. Well, he could return whatever he borrowed later.

The sun began to come out as he walked slowly up to the hut, walking quietly so as not to disturb either Hagrid or his dog. There was a very strange sound coming from inside as he went up to the washing line, like the sound of Sirius' motorbike. Remus quietly went to the washing line. Many pairs of socks – they were no good, a gigantic vest, a very hairy blanket – no, that wouldn't do. He looked at the flapping clothes, and spotted something that would serve, even if it was large enough to put poles in and use as a camping tent. He unpinning the canary-yellow cloak and wrapped it around him. As he had expected, it covered him with metres to spare. With some judicious folding and using the clothes-peg to hold it together, he soon had a fairly reasonable robe around him. It would do. The motorbike sound

came again, and feeling very stupid, Remus realised that it was simply the sound of Hagrid snoring. He smiled at that, and began to walk up to school.

Everything was quiet downstairs, and nobody noticed his entrance. Looking at a clock, Remus saw it was only half past seven and realised that everyone was at breakfast. He went up towards his own rooms, thinking it would be a good idea to put something a little bit more respectable on before going to see Dumbledore. But as he passed a corridor that led up to Dumbledore's office, Dumbledore himself appeared climbing up the stairs from the Great Hall. He was looking a trifle irritated, but he smiled when he saw Remus.

'Ah, Remus, just the person. May I have a word?' He glanced at the canary-yellow cloak with a raised eyebrow and a smile, but did not comment.

'Professor Dumbledore, I need to explain â€" I have to tell you â€" I'm resigning,' Remus said breathlessly.

'Ah? Well, you'd better come into my office and have a seat and tell me about it.' He looked at the cloak again. 'Don't I recognise that?'

'Yes â€" it's Hagrid's â€" I'll take it back to him shortly.'

'Very well, very well. Come on up, then. Have you had breakfast?'

'No.' Remus had scarcely paid any attention to the gnawing hunger within him. It was something he was very practised at controlling.

'Well then, we'd better fetch you something. Come in, take a seat.' They entered the office, and Dumbledore waved a hand at the sofas in one corner. Remus sat in an armchair, feeling both out of place and disreputable in Hagrid's yellow cloak. He waited impatiently while Dumbledore began to boil a kettle and find two mugs for their tea. He gave Remus a bright orange mug with silly faces all over it. As Remus stared at it, one of the faces stuck out its tongue at him. Hesitantly, he sipped the tea.

'Now then,' said Dumbledore. 'Various people have been to me with all sorts of stories about last night. Perhaps you can clarify some of the details? First Sirius told me a very complicated story indeed, and then Harry and his friends told me another, and then Snape gave me a third version of events. I take it you were there for most of the crucial parts?'

'Yes, yes, I was, but then â€" then I was loose in the grounds, Professor, and I hadn't taken the Potion, and that's why I am going to resign. I can't put your students in danger.'

'Did you do any harm?' asked Dumbledore bluntly.

'No.' Remus had never been so glad to say that one syllable before. 'But there is no way to be certain it will not happen again. So I have to leave.'

'We'll get to that presently. First of all, I suppose I'd better fill

you in on the events after you transformed.'

Remus was both pleased and infuriated by Dumbledore's casual way of referring to it. He looked at him expectantly.

'Well, I have some bad news and some good news. Peter Pettigrew escaped, and without him there is no way Sirius' name can be cleared. But Sirius also escaped, thanks to Harry and his friends.'

Remus stared at him. He set the mug down with a loud clunk.

'It's my fault,' he stated. 'If I hadn't been so stupid and careless, he wouldn't have got away.' His voice was angry, not with Dumbledore but with himself.

Dumbledore's face became stern. 'Remus, no man can know what might have happened. All we can know is what has happened, and our business is to do our best to work with it.' He looked at Remus over the tops of his spectacles. 'So I don't want to hear any more of this. Now, on with the story.'

He proceeded to explain to Remus exactly what had happened. When he came to the part about the Dementors, Remus turned ashen.

'They tried to perform the Kiss, just like that?' he asked.

'I'm afraid so. Fortunately, something drove them back.' Dumbledore's genial expression turned almost angry. 'They have been sent back to Azkaban. We cannot have them around the school any longer, they are a danger to the students.'

Remus nodded emphatically. _So am I,_ he thought_, and so I'll leave too. _Dumbledore continued to describe the rest of the story.

'And Sirius just escaped, like that?' he asked at the end. 'Do you know how it happened?'

Dumbledore smiled broadly. 'Ah, now that's the interesting part. You see, it's all down to the quick wits of Hermione Granger and Harry.'

As he explained about the Time-Turner and Buckbeak, Remus' expression of amazement grew.

'Where did Sirius go?' he asked at the end.

'Now, that I cannot tell you,' said Dumbledore. 'I don't know. Out of all of us, I suppose you would have the best idea. Where would Sirius go, given a Hippogriff to ride and knowing that the Ministry is going to come after him?'

Remus paused, thinking about this. His only answer would be that Sirius would always go where he was least expected. But there could be no doubt about what Sirius would want.

'He'll look for Peter,' he answered. 'Sirius won't give up on that.'

Professor Dumbledore smiled. 'That was the conclusion I had drawn.' He looked at Remus consideringly, and then waved his wand. Two plates

appeared on the low table, and also a platter of bacon, eggs and toast. 'Now how about some breakfast? Help yourself, do.'

For a while neither of them spoke while Remus ate hungrily and Dumbledore spread some toast with strawberry jam.

'I am afraid I have some more unpleasant news to give you,' said Dumbledore after a while. Remus looked up expectantly, unable to speak through a mouthful of egg.

'At breakfast just now, quite against all my instructions, Severus informed the Slytherin students that you are a werewolf.'

Remus swallowed the egg. 'It's all right,' he said resignedly. 'I'm leaving anyway, it doesn't really matter who knows. Hermione guessed, anyhow.'

'Did she now? I didn't know that, but it doesn't surprise me.' He looked carefully at Remus' face. 'So you intend to resign?'

'Yes.' Remus set his half-finished breakfast aside. 'I'm sorry to leave you in the lurch like this, but I really cannot stay here where I am a danger to you all.'

Dumbledore only nodded. 'If you are sure. Though you must not allow Severus' actions to force your hand. There are certainly ways we could get around it if you wished.'

'No.' Remus looked Dumbledore in the eye. 'I cannot stay here, knowing that I may hurt any of you. Last night showed me that much. It was very unwise of you to trust me in the first place.'

Dumbledore's forehead furrowed in the merest hint of a frown. 'Remus, I was more than right to trust you, and I trust you now. You have shown yourself to be a loyal friend and a devoted teacher, and I was surprised by neither of these things.'

Remus only shook his head, hearing the sincerity in Dumbledore's voice. He longed to remain here so much he felt something was tearing out his insides. 'I can't,' he said in a voice that was not perfectly steady. He realised there was another thing that must be said. 'You know now about â€" about the Animagus transformation?'

'I do indeed. It is extremely impressive.' He beamed at Remus.

'I'm sorry,' said Remus softly. 'I should have told you.'

'It would have been helpful, I agree,' said Dumbledore in an offhand tone. 'Still, all's well that ends well. Sirius explained it to me, and I do see why you refrained from telling me anything.'

'I'm sorry,' Remus repeated. He was almost wishing Dumbledore would be angry with him, for he knew he deserved it. But Dumbledore only gave him another of his broad smiles.

'So, where will you go now?' he asked.

Remus shrugged, realising he had no idea. 'I'll be fine, I suppose,' he said. 'No doubt something will crop up.'

'Well, if you should ever need anything, you must ask us. After all, you have given us a great deal this year.'

'Thank you,' said Remus, internally vowing not to trouble Hogwarts on any account. 'Now I'd better go and get my things packed up.' He rose, and so did Dumbledore.

'I'll come and see you off presently,' Dumbledore said. Remus looked at his headmaster for a long time, and returned Dumbledore's smile weakly.

'Thank you,' he said again. Pulling the yellow cloak around him, he left the room. He knew this was the right thing to do, the only thing he could do, but it still hurt him terribly.

But there was one thing that made it all worthwhile. Sirius was innocent. He might be hunted and feared, but he had not been a traitor. Sirius had not betrayed James and Lily, he had not tried to murder Harry, he had not killed all those Muggles. Remus had not realised until it was gone how heavily the belief of Sirius' guilt had weighed on him these past twelve years. Now he knew the truth, and the truth had released him from that burden. He smiled as he walked down the corridors towards his office.

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_The last page of the diary turns, and the book falls shut upon the desk, the spell broken. There is something written in pencil on the back cover. Bending down for a closer look, you read it. The words are not magical, and no scene appears as you read. _

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_Moony, Padfoot and Prongs forever. _

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THE END

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_If you want to know what happens next, you can go and read 'Moony and Padfoot.' _

_One thing I want to say. The diary is not like Riddle's in that Remus had to put his life into it. He hasn't. It just shows the scenes when you read the words. Only a device, really. Hope you liked it. _

_Blaise _

_22nd May 2000__

End
file.